

**PSYD66 Current Topics in Human Brain and Behaviour**  
***Understanding Emotional Abuse***

University of Toronto Scarborough  
Fall 2022

**Course Instructor:** Sadia Riaz, Ph.D Candidate (Psychology)

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**Lecture:** Tuesdays 5-7pm in SW316

**Office hours:** Wednesdays, by appointment

**Course Prerequisites:** [PSYB55H3 or (PSYB65H3)] and [0.5 credit at the C-level in PSY or NRO courses] and [(PSYB01H3) or (PSYB04H3) or PSYB70H3] and [PSYB07H3 or STAB22H3 or STAB23H3]

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to raise awareness about the impact of emotional/psychological abuse on human brain and behaviour. We will critically examine current empirical literature during our seminars to explore: what is emotional abuse, common manifestations of emotional abuse in different relationships (including, but not limited to, parent-child relationships, intimate partner relationships and workplace relationships), known impacts of emotional abuse on human brain, behaviour and development, and gaps in the existing literature.

This D-level seminar course is a great opportunity for both independent and collaborative learning where student presentations and class discussions will guide the trajectory of the course. This class is designed to help equip students with a few key academic skills including effective literature reviews, critical thinking and effectively communicating ideas, arguments, and critiques in written and oral presentation formats.

**Learning Outcomes:**

*By the end of this course, students will:*

1. Gain an understanding of what is emotional/ psychological abuse and common manifestations of emotional abuse in different types of relationships including, but not limited to, parent-child relationships, intimate partner relationships and workplace relationships.
2. Understand known impacts of emotional abuse on human brain, behaviour and development and gaps in the existing literature.
3. Improve their literature review skills through practice in reading and analyzing scientific articles and evaluating which questions remain to be answered in the literature.
4. Improve their academic communication skills in written and oral presentation formats through individual and group presentations, leading and participating in class discussions and written assignments.
5. Develop critical thinking skills, scientific creativity and an evidence-based approach to argumentation through thoughtful class discussions and written assignments designed to identify and articulate emotionally abusive behaviours.

6. Improve presentation and public speaking skills through individual and group presentations, and in-class discussions.
7. Engage in reflection on their learning process to promote a deeper understanding of the course material, improve their ability to synthesize information from multiple sources into a coherent narrative and thoughtful critiques, and foster enduring positive learning habits.

**Tentative Class Schedule:**

*A more detailed schedule will be shared once group presentation topics have been finalized*

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Deadlines/ Notes</b>
1	Sept 6	Course introduction and expectations Topic: What is Emotional Abuse? <i>Example individual presentation</i>	Discuss presentation and written assignment topics. Sign up for individual presentations.
2	Sept 13	Individual Presentations	
3	Sept 20	Individual Presentations	
4	Sept 27	Individual Presentations	Last day for group presentation topic approval: Friday Sept 30
5	Oct 4	Individual Presentations	
	Oct 8-14	Reading week	
6	Oct 18	Group Presentation 1 Topic: TBD	Written Assignment 1 due Monday Oct 17, 11:59pm
7	Oct 25	Group Presentation 2 Topic: TBD	
8	Nov 1	Group Presentation 3 Topic: TBD	
9	Nov 8	Group Presentation 4 Topic: TBD	
10	Nov 15	Group Presentation 5 Topic: TBD	
11	Nov 22	Group Presentation 6 Topic: TBD	
12	Nov 29	Closing Remarks	Written Assignment 2 due Monday Dec 5, 11:59pm

**Course Evaluation Scheme:**

- Individual Presentation and Discussion (10%)
- Group Presentation and Discussion (30%) = Group grade (10%) + Individual Grade (20%)
- Class Participation (10%)
- Written Assignments (50%) = Assignment 1 (20%) + Assignment 2 (30%)

## **Course Components:**

All assignments submitted to Quercus will be evaluated by Ouriginal to detect possible plagiarism.

### **1. Individual presentations (10%)**

Each student will be assigned one term describing an emotionally abusive behaviour that they will explain in their individual presentation. Presentations should be 5-10min long followed by a 5min discussion or interactive activity. Presentations will be graded on their clarity, accuracy, depth/nuance of explanation and selection of information sources. Presentations should include a good variety of examples. The discussion/ activity should be engaging and help the class better understand the presentation topic.

NB: Since basic terms are often not clearly defined in the literature (e.g., gaslighting, triangulation, stonewalling), for the individual presentations, you may use resources created by qualified professionals (e.g., psychologist, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist etc.)- these can include books, websites, mental health resources, Youtube videos and more.

Presentation slides should be submitted on Quercus no later than the day of your presentation (11:59pm).

### **2. Group Presentation and Discussion (30%)**

The class will be split into 6 groups (4 students per group), with each group leading one group presentation. Group presentations should focus on topics related to known impacts of emotional abuse on human brain, behaviour, and development. Topics for the group presentations will be decided by the group and approved by the course instructor by Friday Sept 30. A selection of recommended readings is available on Quercus to serve as a starting point to help you explore a few relevant topics.

1 week prior to the group presentation (due Tuesday 11:59pm), the group must submit 1 article as mandatory reading for the class. The choice of article will be evaluated as part of the group presentation grade. The required reading should provide a good foundation for the presentation and help facilitate a more engaging class discussion. All other students (non-presenters) in the class are expected to have read the assigned reading before class. Barring exceptional circumstances, readings will be made available no later than Friday.

Group presentations will be evaluated for the overall flow and quality of the presentation, choice of presentation topic and required reading, and ability to meet deadlines (group presentation grade: 10%) as well as individual students' contribution to the presentation (individual presentation grade: 20%). Students will be evaluated on their understanding of the literature, ability to summarize and communicate major findings, ability to synthesize an overview of the topic based on the available literature, ability to highlight the limitations or gaps in the literature, as well as presentation skills. All group members are expected to contribute comparably to the presentation.

The presentation is expected to be 1.5 hours long (beginning at 5:10pm), including a ~30-minute discussion led by the presenting group. You may choose to divide this discussion time in 2 blocks (during and after the presentation) or facilitate a longer discussion after the presentation. You may also include a short (maximum 10 minute) break within the presentation- this will not count towards your presentation or discussion time. Your presentation and required reading should set the stage for an engaging and thoughtful discussion about the current state of knowledge for the selected topic. The discussion should aim to help your classmates think about the take-home message from your presentation, while also encouraging critical analysis and further dialogue about any questions that were not clearly addressed in the presentation or ways in which the research field can be improved/ expanded. The group can decide on the most effective format for the discussion (eg. Q and A/ short quiz/ interactive activity etc.) and topics to be discussed.

While the group should work together to generate an effective discussion, presenters will be graded individually on their ability to lead and contribute to the discussion based on their knowledge of the topic and ability to critically think about and answer questions, as well as their ability to engage their peers in the discussion.

Please arrive for class at 5pm on the day of your presentation to avoid any delays. Final presentation slides should be submitted on Quercus no later than the day of the presentation (Tuesday, 11:59pm).

Group work is an invaluable experience in learning to effectively collaborate and communicate scientific knowledge and ideas with others. As a group, you are expected to agree on member responsibilities and a mutual understanding of how to communicate with one another to ensure that each member has their voice heard, is respected, and included in the process. *In the event of an irresolvable group conflict, group members should contact the course instructor (sadia.riaz@mail.utoronto.ca) to raise their concerns as soon as possible (before the assigned group presentation date).*

### **3. Class Participation (10%)**

For weeks 2-11, non-presenting students will be evaluated on their participation during the class discussion based on the quality of their contributions, questions and insights, and level of engagement with class presentations and required readings.

### **4. Written Assignments (50%)**

The purpose of the written assignments is to: (1) help develop scientific creativity, critical thinking and writing skills, (2) test your knowledge and understanding of common patterns of emotionally abusive behaviours, and (3) help improve your ability to read and review literature. As part of the course, we will cover a wide range of emotionally abusive behaviours. In these assignments, you will critically analyze scenarios to identify whether emotional abuse is evident, and (if so) name and explain/ articulate these behaviours.

All written assignments should follow APA formatting and be submitted in a word document.

**(1) Assignment 1 (20%): Monday Oct 17, 11:59pm**

In this assignment you will critically analyze the descriptions of scenarios to identify whether emotional abuse is evident, and (if so) name and explain/ articulate these behaviours. The assignment should be no longer than 4 pages double spaced (minimum: 2 pages), excluding references. You will be evaluated on your understanding of patterns of emotionally abusive behaviours, ability to identify and explain these patterns, and quality of writing (e.g., clarity, conciseness). The assignment will be made available 2 weeks prior to the due date.

**(2) Assignment 2 (30%): Monday Dec 5, 11:59pm**

In this assignment you will critically analyse a text exchange to identify whether emotional abuse is evident, and (if so) name and explain/ articulate these behaviours. In addition, you will include an analysis of likely impacts of observed behaviours on the recipient(s) of the emotionally abusive behaviours based on the literature. The assignment should be no longer than 10 pages double spaced (minimum: 5 pages), excluding references.

You will be evaluated on your understanding of patterns of emotionally abusive behaviours, ability to identify and explain these patterns, your knowledge and understanding of the relevant literature, ability to present a critical, thoughtful, and logical analysis, and writing skills. When considering the impacts of emotional abuse in the context of the assignment, you should consider the nature of the relationship, the age/ gender etc. of the people involved, the types, intensity and frequency of emotionally abusive behaviours observed, and how these factors may interact and influence the impact of the situation. The assignment will be made available at least 4 weeks prior to the due date.

**Writing resources:**

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is available to support you in your writing and English language needs. It offers online tutoring and consultations and has a variety of helpful online resources. For more information, please visit CTL’s Academic Learning Support site at <http://uoft.me/AcademicLearningSupport>

**Course Grading Scheme:**

In accordance with the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy:

<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-1-2020>

<b>A+</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A-</b>	<b>B+</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>F</b>
≥90%	85-89	80-84	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	57-59	53-56	50-52	0-49

**Course Policies:**

**1. Classroom conduct**

Our classroom is a conducive learning environment where everyone should feel safe, respected, and free to express intellectual curiosity. To help create this learning environment, I ask that you use respectful language, minimize potential distractions during presentations and

discussions (e.g., off-topic chatting), show up to class on time, support your peers and actively engage in class-discussions.

## **2. Email policy**

Course-related correspondence should be sent to the course instructor at [sadia.riaz@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:sadia.riaz@mail.utoronto.ca) from your utoronto.ca email, with “PSYD66” in the email subject. Generally, emails will be answered within 2 business days. For questions that may require a longer discussion or back-and-forth, I strongly recommend making an appointment to see me during office hours.

## **3. Contesting a grade**

Re-grade requests will only be considered within two weeks of the grade being received. These will only be considered if adequate written justification is provided by the student. If granted, re-grading will consist of re-evaluation of the complete assignment, potentially leading to a change in the grade in either direction, i.e. a grade increase, no change, or decrease. Requests without a solid rationale will not be considered (e.g. higher grade needed for entering graduate school, etc.).

## **4. Copyright of lecture material**

As protection of copyright, the unauthorized use, copying, or uploading on the internet of lecture materials (presentation slides, articles etc.) is **strictly prohibited**.

**The remainder of this syllabus covers important university and departmental policies and guidelines that you are expected to be familiar with and adhere to for this course:**

### Disability-Related Accommodations

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office (<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/>) as soon as possible.

AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm AA142, Arts and Administration Building) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. Please contact 416-287-7560 (tel/TTY) or email [ability.utsc@utoronto.ca](mailto:ability.utsc@utoronto.ca) for more information.

The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

### University's Plagiarism Detection Tool

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that

apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

## Department of Psychology Missed Term Work Policy

For missed term work (assignments and term tests) due to illness, emergency, or other mitigating circumstances, please follow the procedures outlined below.

Note:

- The following reasons are not considered sufficient for missed term work: travel for leisure, weddings, personal commitments, work commitments, human error.
- [Missed Final Exams](#) are handled by the Registrar's Office and should be declared on eService.
- Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, accommodations are only possible via the Registrar's Office [petition process](#).

The email address to submit missed term work accommodation requests in **PSYD66** is: **sadia.riaz@mail.utoronto.ca** with subject "*PSYD66 MTW accommodation request*"

### **ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY accommodations:**

For missed work due to ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY, complete the following process:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Declare your absence on [ACORN](#) (Profile & Settings > Absence Declaration)
3. Email **both** of the following items to the course email **WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS** of the missed work:
  - the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#)
  - \*AND\***
  - a screenshot of your Self-Declared Absence on ACORN

*Note:*

- *If you are unable to submit your request within 2 business days, you must still email your instructor within the 2 business day window to explain the nature of the delay. Exceptions to the 2 business day deadline will only be made under exceptional circumstances.*
- *If your absence is declared on ACORN, we do not require any additional supporting documentation (e.g. medical notes) to support your missed term work accommodation request.*

### **ACADEMIC CONFLICT accommodations:**

For missed term work due to an ACADEMIC CONFLICT (e.g. two midterms at the same time):

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Take screenshots of your course Quercus pages that demonstrate the conflict.

3. Email the form and screenshots to the course email **at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity**, or as soon as possible if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier. Requests sent after the activity deadline may not be accommodated.

Note:

- *Multiple assignments due on the same day are not considered conflicts. Students are expected to manage their time effectively to meet assignment deadlines.*
- *Back-to-back tests/quizzes are not considered conflicts. Only overlapping activities are conflicts.*
- *Students are responsible for keeping their course timetables conflict-free. Students who register in two courses with overlapping lecture/tutorial/lab schedules will not be accommodated.*

**RELIGIOUS CONFLICT accommodations:**

For missed term work due to a RELIGIOUS CONFLICT:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Email the form to the course **email at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity**, or as soon as possible if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier. Requests sent after the activity deadline may not be accommodated.

**ACCESSABILITY SERVICES accommodations:**

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to ACCESSABILITY REASONS:

- **Contact your AccessAbility consultant** and have them email the course email detailing accommodations required.

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to ACCESSABILITY REASONS:

- If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 3 days):
  1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
  2. Email the form **\*AND\*** your **Accommodation Letter** to the course email specifying how many days extension you are requesting.
- If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that):
  1. **Contact your AccessAbility consultant** and have them email the course email detailing the accommodations required.

**Accommodation Procedure:**

After submitting your documentation, you will receive a response from your instructor or TA. This form does not guarantee that you will be accommodated. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request. **You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily**, as accommodations may be time-critical.



For missed assignments, **do not wait for the instructor's response to resume work on your assignment.** Extensions may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency. Complete your assignment as soon as you're able, and email it to your instructor.

For an **anticipated absence** (e.g. a scheduled surgery or an illness with a prolonged recovery period), if you would like to request accommodations in advance, submit a [Verification of Illness Form](#) completed by your doctor AND the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) to the course email. Absences can be declared up to 14 days into the future on ACORN.

### **Missed Accommodations**

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting its requirements, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations. **Please make it clear in your subject line that you are requesting a second accommodation.** E.g. If you are given an extension but are still sick and need more time, or if you miss a make-up term test, you must submit *another* [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) and declare your extended absence on ACORN.

\*Note: In the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not necessarily be provided.

## Academic Integrity

The University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences in papers and assignments include using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement, submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor, making up sources or facts, obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams cheating includes using or possessing unauthorized aids, looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test, misrepresenting your identity, or falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If students have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, they are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from their instructors or from other institutional resources.

Note: You may see advertisements for services offering grammar help, essay editing and proof-reading. Be very careful. If these services take a draft of your work and significantly change the

content and/or language, you may be committing an academic offence (unauthorized assistance) under the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. It is much better and safer to take your draft to the Writing Centre as early as you can. They will give you guidance you can trust. Students for whom English is not their first language should go to the English Language Development Centre.

If you decide to use these services in spite of this caution, you must keep a draft of your work and any notes you made before you got help and be prepared to give it to your instructor on request.

## Religious Accommodations

The University has a commitment concerning accommodation for religious observances. I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. According to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (like a test, or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.